

*Natick Public Schools
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
October 19, 2020*

The School Committee held a meeting on Monday, October 19, 2020 at 6:30pm via a Virtual Meeting. Chair McDonough called the meeting to order and took roll call at 6:35pm.

Members Present: Julie McDonough, Henry Haugland, Donna McKenzie, Matthew Brand, Cathi Collins, Hayley Sonneborn, Shai Fuxman

Others Present: Dr. Anna Nolin Superintendent
Dr. Peter Gray Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Tim Luff Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Kirk Downing Assistant Superintendent
Ms. Rose McDermott Executive Assistant/Recording Secretary
Mr. Jefferson Wood Teacher Representative

Announcements

Chair McDonough announced that there was a request for an ASL interpreter and therefore they were hired by the Natick Public Schools for this evening. Chair McDonough announced that Spark Kindness and Sepac emailed the School Committee and asked that they announce their upcoming program called Empowering Students with Hidden Disabilities. Dr. Nolin announced that a Natick High School Student, Nora Elbasha, was chosen to represent the School Committee's interests on the the Select Board's Equity Committee. A little later on in the meeting, Nora Elbasha joined and introduced herself and the honor she feels to have been chosen. Dr. Nolin made some announcements in regard to Halloween activities. Students will be able to dress up with appropriate costumes and expectations for Halloween activities at the buildings. Dr. Nolin announced that the mascot of the Remote Learning Academy has been chosen. It's a sea otter. Fourth grader, Kaitlyn F. creating the winning design and rationale. Chair McDonough announced the flow for future meetings. We are trying to streamline the meetings. She also announced that we will once again begin offering Superintendent and School Committee joint office hours. This will be another venue for parents to share their thoughts.

Consent Agenda

Approval of School Committee Minutes of August 31, 2020 and Executive Session Minutes of May 19, 2020, June 1, 2020, June 15, 2020, August 10, 2020 and August 31, 2020:

Mr. Brand motioned to approve the consent agenda. Dr. Fuxman seconded. Chair McDonough called for a roll call vote:

Dr. Fuxman – Yes

Mr. Haugland – Yes

Dr. McKenzie – Yes

Mr. Brand – Yes

Ms. Sonneborn - Yes

Ms. Collins – Yes

Chair McDonough – Yes

It was unanimously approved by those present 7-0-0.

Public Speak

Due to the nature of a virtual meeting, the instructions from the Attorney General were to submit public remarks via email to Chair McDonough. Chair McDonough received no public remarks.

Stephanie Wasik, Lilja Principal, Entry Plan

Dr. Nolin introduced Stefani Wasik, Lilja Principal. Ms Wasik provided a presentation us to what her plans are for Lilja School. Ms. Wasik created this plan to communicate her commitment to the students, staff and families of Lilja Elementary School. She outlined her action steps, findings and goals as she strives to learn the values, traditions, and structures that are already in place, support the learning and growth of students and staff, and provide the resources and support necessary to maximize each students' potential. This plan, will also be shared with the Lilja School Council and with the Lilja School staff as they determine next steps to maintain and grow an environment of continuous improvement for Lilja school and their students. The School Committee thanked Ms. Wasik for the concise presentation and welcomed her to Natick.

Survey Results From COVID Pool Testing Survey and Updates on RFP Response

Dr. Nolin reviewed the raw data from the survey. There were 1,072 responses. 75.2% of families would allow their students to be tested. Dr. Nolin reviewed the RFP's and said the average cost was about \$200 per student and/or staff per month. This would be well over 1 million dollars for the year. The District has 50 proposals to review. Dr. Nolin asked how the committee would like to proceed. A School Committee member was not against testing but thinks we may have to ride it out a little while until a possible lower price point is available.

Plans for Evaluating the Current Models of Learning (Hybrid and RLA)

Dr. Nolin reviewed her plan. She shared ideas and the timeline with the School Committee. She intends to receive feedback from the School Committee. On October 26th we will begin hosting weekly office hours with the School Committee and Superintendent on the following topics:

Special Education –

- What perspectives should the district consider as we work in partnership with special education families to ensure a successful and safe school year?

All Families –

- What is working well and what needs improvement with our school model (your child's model) so far this year?
- What support do you and your students need as we go through this change? • What is the most important thing you want to share about your family's school experience so far this year? • Students
- What are the most important things to share about your school experience so far this year? • What things would you like the adults who run the school to know about how school is going so far? Staff
- What are the most important challenges you are seeing or experiencing with remote and/ or hybrid teaching and learning and what is working well?
- What additional resources and supports do you need to ensure your students are successful with online learning?
- What are some particularly interesting remote teaching best practices, insights and innovations? • Considering a hybrid remote/in-person approach, what are some changes we need to make to equitably assess student progress?

On October 30th, we will open the survey to families. Dr. Nolin hopes to present findings to the School Committee and the community at large on November 30, 2020.

ACTION ITEMS Approval of Facilities Warrant Article

Ms. Collins reviewed the Finance Committee vote 8-1-0 to refer the article to the Select Board, the School Committee and the Town Administrator. Ms. Collins would like the School Committee to vote now in

advance of Town Meeting or to request that Town Meeting only refer it back to the School Committee. The facilities oversight committee has met twice, and the group is going to speak to Mr. Gadson. The sense from the Town is not moving forward. However, we can decide any time to remove ourselves from this. The challenge is we don't have the reassurance that things will change. There's been no commitment or assurance from the Town to honor the Memorandum of Agreement as written. There hasn't even been a discussion about reinforcing it. It is currently not being executed. This committee didn't sign on for what it's had to deal with. Ms. Collins would like to revoke the department now with an effective date of July 1st and ask for the monies to fund it. Dr. Nolin believes the School Committee should work on getting an agreement to get everyone to follow the Memorandum of Agreement.

Ms. Collins motioned to refer Article 20 to the Select Board and the School Committee. Mr. Brand seconded. Chair McDonough called for a roll call vote:

Dr. Fuxman – Yes

Mr. Haugland – Yes

Dr. McKenzie – Yes

Mr. Brand – Yes

Ms. Sonneborn - Yes

Ms. Collins – Yes

Chair McDonough – Yes

It was unanimously approved by those present 7-0-0.

Enrollment Update

Mr. Kirk Downing, Assistant Superintendent reviewed the October 1, 2020 enrollment numbers. There was an increase of 10 enrollments this past month. Our enrollment is currently at 5,183 students enrolled at Natick Public Schools. There is a difference of 210 students from last year. The lower number is because of grades K and 1. Those parents have chosen alternative learning for their children during the Pandemic.

At approximately, 8:51pm, Mr. Brand moved to adjourn. Dr. McKenzie seconded. Chair McDonough called for a roll call vote:

Dr. McKenzie – Yes

Dr. Fuxman - Yes

Mr. Haugland – Yes

Ms. Sonneborn - Yes

Mr. Brand – Yes

Ms. Collins - Yes

Chair McDonough – Yes

It was unanimously approved by those present 7-0-0.

Anna Nolin

Superintendent

Executive Secretary to the School Committee

Rose McDermott

Executive Assistant/Recording Secretary

Attest: _____

Documents Provided in Novus Agenda and materials used at this meeting can be found [here](#).